10. (Amended) Apparatus for providing end-to-end source route information to source and destination end stations coupled to respective local and remote source-route bridge (SRB) subnetworks of a data link switching (DLSw) network, the local and remote SRB subnetworks including respective local and remote DLSw peer devices that communicate over an intermediate wide area network (WAN) in accordance with DLSw routing information field (RIF) passthru functionality, the apparatus comprising:

a memory for storing a plurality of capability message data structures exchanged among the DLSw peer devices to determine whether the peer devices support DLSw RIF passthru functionality, wherein a first of the plurality of message data structures comprises a DLSw RIF passthru exchange vector that indicates whether the DLSw peer devices support DLSw RIF passthru functionality;

a processor coupled to the memory and configured to process the message data structures; and

a network adapter coupled to the processor and memory for transmitting and receiving the message data structures to and from the WAN.

Please add the following new claims 21, et seq.:

21. (New) A method for operating a router, comprising:

receiving a first control vector, said first control vector having source route information from a routing information field (RIF) of a first token ring (TR) explorer frame transmitted by a source end station on a first TR network, said first control vector created at a remote router connected to said first TR network;

extracting said source route information from said first control vector;

loading said extracted source route information into a RIF of a second TR explorer frame; and

transmitting said second TR explorer frame on a second TR network to a destination end station to provide said destination end station with complete source route information representative of an end-to-end session with said source end station.

22. (New) The method of claim 21 further comprising: said router and said remote router are DLSw devices.

23. (New) A router, comprising:

means for receiving a first control vector, said first control vector having source route information from a routing information field (RIF) of a first token ring (TR) explorer frame transmitted by a source end station on a first TR network, said first control vector created at a remote router connected to said first TR network;

means for extracting said source route information from said first control vector;

means for loading said extracted source route information into a RIF of a second TR explorer frame; and

means for transmitting said second TR explorer frame on a second TR network to a destination end station to provide said destination end station with complete source route information representative of an end-to-end session with said source end station.

24. (New) A router, comprising:

a network adapter to receive a first control vector, said first control vector having source route information from a routing information field (RIF) of a first token ring (TR) explorer frame transmitted by a source end station on a first TR network, said first control vector created at a remote router connected to said first TR network;

a processor to extract said source route information from said first control vector and to load said extracted source route information into a RIF of a second TR explorer frame; and

a network adapter to transmit said second TR explorer frame on a second TR network to a destination end station to provide said destination end station with complete source route information representative of an end-to-end session with said source end station.

25. (New) The router of claim 24 further comprising: said router and said remote router are DLSw devices.

26. (New) A computer readable media, comprising: said computer readable media containing instructions for execution in a processor for the practice of the method of claim 1, or claim 21.

27. (New) Electromagnetic signals propagating on a computer network, comprising: said electromagnetic signals carrying instructions for execution on a processor for the practice of the method of claim 1, or claim 21.

REMARKS

This Amendment is filed in response to the Office Action dated December 10, 2002. All objections and rejections are respectfully traversed.

Claims 1-8, and 10-27 are in the case.

Claims 1-8 have been allowed.

Claims 21-27 were added to better claim the invention.

Claim 10 was amended to better claim the invention.

Claim 9 was cancelled without prejudice.

At paragraph 4 of the Office Action claims 10-20 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim. Claim 10 has been amended in independent form including all the limitations of the base claim, and all claims 10-20 are believed to be in condition for allowance.

All independent claims are believed to be in condition for allowance.

All dependent claims are believed to be dependent from allowable independent claims, and therefore in condition for allowance.

Favorable action is respectfully solicited.

Please charge any additional fee occasioned by this paper to our Deposit Account No. 03-1237.

Respectfully submitted,

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